

Are You Praying?

By David Alan Black

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Today I have a brief challenge, then a quote. That's all.

The challenge is this: Do, you, dear reader, have a daily devotional – a time you spend in the Word of God and in prayer each and every day?

(Please pause right now and answer this question to yourself. Is it yes or no?)

The psalmist said, "I have set the Lord always before me. Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken" (Psalm 16:8). David is saying that our first priority in life has to be Christ. David sought to live life from God's perspective, not his own.

If our hunger for God is not assuaged in the morning, dare we think we can benefit others in our lives during the day? David had the habit of daily, secret prayer. In Psalm 5:3 he wrote: "Morning by morning, O Lord, you hear my voice; morning by morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation." David knew that if he started his day with God, he was more likely to continue through the day "practicing the presence" of the Lord. He knew that it was the conscious awareness of God's presence and power that gave him emotional and spiritual stability. I know that's how it is with me.

Our church recently had a two week revival. The second week was devoted to preaching services. But the first week was spent pouring out our hearts to God in corporate prayer. What a difference that made! Desperate times call for desperate measures. The busier we get as churches, the more we need to "regroup" and get a spiritual perspective on things.

What it all comes down to is this. Each of us as individuals needs to reorient ourselves to God on at least a daily basis. I don't see how this can be done without a personal quiet time. A Christian's first and main business in life is to have a mind set to seek after God.

So much for the challenge.

Here's the quote. It's a powerful entry taken from the diary of David Brainerd, missionary to the American Indians. Please read it prayerfully and carefully.

I found in myself a spirit of love, and warmth, and power to address the poor Indians. God helped me to plead with them to "turn from all the vanities of the heathen to the living God." [W]hen I came away from them, I spent the whole time, while I was riding to my lodgings three miles distant, in prayer and praise to God.

After I rode more than two miles, it came into my mind to dedicate myself to God again; which I did with great solemnity and unspeakable satisfaction. Especially gave up myself to him renewedly in the work of the ministry. And this I did by divine grace, I hope, without any exception or reserve; not the least shrinking back from any difficulties that might attend this great and blessed work. I seemed to be most free, cheerful, and full in this dedication of myself. My whole soul cried: "Lord, to thee I dedicate myself! Oh, accept of me and let me be thine forever. Lord, I desire nothing else; I desire nothing more. Oh, come, come, Lord, accept a poor worm. 'Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And there is none upon earth, that I desire besides Thee.'"

The believer who finds soul-rest in that moment-by-moment seeking after God will lead others past himself to that very same God!

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